

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Hu Jintao of China in London, England

April 1, 2009

President Obama. I just want to welcome President Hu and thank him for extending himself to come to visit and allowing us to have our first face to face conversation.

Obviously, China is a great power. It has a long and extraordinary history. The relationship between the United States and China has become extremely constructive. Our economic relationships are very strong. And I've said publicly, and I continue to believe, that the relationship between China and the United States is not only important for the citizens of both our countries, but will help to set the stage for how the world deals with a whole host of challenges in the years to come.

So I'm looking forward to a very productive and open conversation about not only the state of the world economy during this time of crisis, but also know we can work cooperatively together to improve peace and security for both nations and the world at large.

I believe that as strong as our relationship already is, I am confident that we can make it even stronger in the years to come.

President Hu. I'm very happy to have this opportunity to meet with President Obama. It's our first face-to-face meeting.

Since President Obama took office, we have secured a good beginning in the growth of this relationship. President Obama and I stayed in close touch, and foreign ministers of our two countries have exchanged visits in a short span of time.

In addition, the two sides both have reached agreement on the characterization of the China-U.S. relationship in this new era and on the mechanism of the strategic economic dialogs. These results have not come easily, which deserve our both sides' efforts to cherish.

And as President Obama rightly said just now, sound China-U.S. relationship is not only in the fundamental interest of our two peoples and our two countries, but also contributes to peace, stability, and prosperity in the Asian-Pacific region and in the world at large.

The Chinese side is willing to work together with the U.S. side to secure even greater progress in the development of the China-U.S. relationship, and I'm willing to establish a good working relationship and personal friendship with President Obama.

I'm sure my meeting with President Obama today will be positive and productive.

President Obama. If I'm not mistaken, we're going to have our respective representatives on the strategic and economic dialog appear with us, so that everybody knows who's going to be talking.

So these high-level ministers will be charged with working in a very detailed and constructive way on issues of mutual interest to our two countries. And we are very grateful to President Hu for designating such distinguished ministers who are going to be working very constructively with Tim Geithner, my Secretary of Treasury, as well as Hillary Clinton, the Secretary of State.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:24 p.m. at Winfield House. President Hu referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Yang Jiechi of China. President Hu spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : China :: President Hu.

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